



The C A S E of the
French Protestant Weavers,

THAT in the Reign of the late Queen *Elizabeth*, and of all her Successors; such Protestants Strangers, being Weavers, as have come hither, and been admitted of the Company, have been suffered quietly to use their Trades.

That in King *Charles* the Second's Reign, there being some Differences between the Company of Weavers, and some Protestants Strangers using that Trade, there was, after a full Hearing in Council, some Rules made and agreed upon by the Company of Weavers, and formed into By-Laws, on which such Protestants Strangers should Work in their Trade.

That the French Protestants Refugies of that Trade, having been admitted by the Master and Assistants of the Company, have duly observed the said By-Laws, and Bear, and Pay in common with the other Members of the Company, all Duties and Charges of the same.

That of late, some private Informers have prosecuted these Weavers upon the Statute of 5 *Eliz.* for Exercising their said Trade, as not having served an Apprenticeship thereto, for Seven Years, tho' the intent of that Statute be fully answered in their Skill and Abilities to Exercise the same; by means whereof, if permitted to proceed, many Thousand Families will be Ruin'd, who left their Native Country, by reason of the Cruel and Barbarous Persecutions Exercised in *France*, against those of the Reformed Religion, and who Transported themselves into this Kingdom, for Shelter and Refuge, upon the Encouragement of the late King *Charles* the Second's (of ever Blessed Memory) Declaration, issued out in *July* 1681; and by that of Their Present Majesties, of the 25th of *April* 1689. Promising to them, all sorts of Privileges and Protections. And if some speedy course be not taken, to hinder such Pretensions, they will be forc'd to leave this Kingdom; or, be a Charge to the Publick, having nothing but their Trade, to maintain their numerous Families.

That His Majesty and His most Honourable Privy Council have been so Sensible of the Unreasonableness of these Prosecutions, that upon Application made, by some French Protestants, to His Majesty in Council, He was Gratioussly Pleased to refer the Petition to Sir *George Treby*, His Majesties Attorney General, and to order him to Mediate with the Master of the Company, to admit them to the Freedom of Exercising their Trades; which if he could not effect, to Report to the Board, what Course he judged most adviseable, for procuring that Liberty to these French Protestants.

And that the Art and Mystery of Weaving Stuffs, and Silk, after the French way, have been brought hither by the Protestants Strangers, to the great Advantage and Benefit of this Nation, and to the great Loss and Impoverishing of the French King; who lost by the Persecution against his Protestant People, both his Manufactures and his Subjects.

In Order to whose Relief, this Honourable House have been Pleased to give leave for a Bill to be brought in; They therefore humbly Pray the Favour of this House, in passing the same.